

STATE SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary – September 16, 2003

Bob Schille called the meeting to order (while Jeff Kelley-Clarke was enjoying the marvelous I-5 rush hour scenery.) Following introductions, SWAC members approved the July 15, 2003 meeting summary.

Beyond Waste State Solid Waste Plan – Progress Report - Cheryl Smith

Cheryl reported that work is progressing on the 5 key initiatives (Organics, Green Building, Moderate-Risk Waste, Industrial Waste & Performance Measures). They're on the last leg of the project. They're almost ready to put pen to paper.

Each of the Key Initiative Teams is working on:

- Developing/revising goals and proposed actions
- Prioritizing proposed actions
- Incorporating feedback from SWAC Subcommittee and other stakeholders
- Reformatting/paring down the action steps
- Writing text to support the goals and actions
- Reviewing and proposing performance measures and indicators
- Coordinating with actions and goals proposed by the other initiative teams
- Peer review
- Engaging experts/organizations & businesses as appropriate

Some thoughts from SWAC on the Beyond Waste Initiatives:

Organics Initiative

SWAC members generally supported the proposed priorities of: "Mapping" the universe of organics; developing and expanding markets for organic materials; and state government leading by example. Specific comments include:

- This is an area where state purchasing can create markets.
- Would like a clearinghouse at the state level to provide information about new processes that arise—such as a web-based application.
- Need sound information on products, plus safety testing.

Local Funding Options

SWAC members expressed a great deal of interest in the ideas being looked into for financing local government solid waste programs as disposal revenues decrease and demand for non-disposal programs and services increases.

- For the Southwest part of state – would like feedback on financing by flat fee or taxes.
- Border counties could be negatively affected outside of Central Washington counties. People could then choose to go across border to another state (Oregon) for cheaper disposal.
- Disposal is both by tonnage or flat fee. It's pretty common, but raising prices gets pretty political. Not sure it's a good idea to get into a dilemma of taxes competing with priorities in the tax trough.

- Currently, tipping fees (\$98/ton in one county) fund the recycling programs (some of the \$98 goes to debt service on facilities) and education programs. Educational programs are viewed as soft items, but debt service must be paid even if revenues decrease.
- Don't use State Plan to lay out funding options in great detail. Just say that the Beyond Waste Initiatives will cause changes in disposal volumes and associated revenues. In some counties, the traditional funding mechanisms may not work as that happens. We need to look at alternatives so that we don't depend on tipping fees in the future.
- The plan should point out the emerging problem. We need to look at flexible funding options to make programs work. One option will not work for every county.
- It's possible that the more recycling that occurs, the less that remains to dispose and the whole solid waste system will cost less (so maybe the funding problem will not be as severe as some might expect) Political system needs to handle how to pay for recycling.
- The worst thing would be a very aggressive plan of action that doesn't address cost problems. However, don't put specific financing solutions in the plan. A range of potential options is better.
- As we invest in capital facilities, these costs will be there for a long time. We need to watch what we build and question whether we are building them to the detriment of the Beyond Waste direction we want to move toward.
- No one wants to raise tipping fees to fund education.
- Need to talk to elected officials and local governments concerning funding. UTC is interested in recommendations and can help us understand how they will impact existing system and decide when legislation is needed.
- Rural counties/programs depend on state funding. If it costs more to recycle, we will landfill it.
- Consider interrelations between enforcement and fees. Cities, UTC, Health Departments and Ecology—how can they work together to ensure level of enforcement action and funding stays high enough to keep systems whole.

Moderate Risk Waste

SWAC members generally supported the proposed priorities of: Identifying hazards associated with products and services; coordinating and aligning planning and implementation; and, providing economic incentives and disincentives for reducing moderate-risk wastes. Specific comments include:

- Identifying hazards is critical. We need to make sure we discuss where most cost beneficial decisions are being made. What should be kept out of the environment (oil/glass).
- It will be helpful to the local government for the plan to state which MRW materials and products pose the highest risks. When that occurs, we will have better direction and consistency of programs.
- Need to address Financial Assurance, will the plan include last year's Hazardous Waste Bill?
- E-waste is a big issue. Add recycle/disposal fees onto the cost of the TV/computer.

Additional Comments Related to the Beyond Waste Project include:

- Toyota wants to look at zero waste (sending no waste to landfills). They are also interested in energy production (such as green power from incinerators).

- Request that Ecology broaden the definition of Beyond Waste to include incineration as constituting waste reduction for the long-term vision. Many corporations view incineration as a better alternative than recycling, especially for non-recyclables such as tires and wood waste.
- The ability to measure and state goals, then track progress, will be key to getting resources.
- Competing with Transportation needs will depend on very clear focus of where we're going. Then we will be able to measure.
- State funding should be directed to Ecology to do more recycling.

Air Quality Program-Incinerator Rule -Tom Todd

Tom Todd briefed us on the upcoming changes to Chapter 173-434 WAC – Solid Waste Incinerators.

Tom used the Tacoma Steam Plant (TSP) as an example. There is controversy over whether the current incinerator rule applies to the TSP (which is burning coal, wood wastes and other solid wastes). TSP didn't meet criteria for the Air Quality rule (that had engineering specifics about temperature, how hot gases were, etc.) TSP didn't want to be considered an incinerator.

This issue went to the Pollution Control Hearings Board and TSP lost the case. They needed to comply. The Governor gave TSP a reprieve for six months while electricity prices were high. TSP has halted their burning for now. In order for it to be economically viable, TSP needs a tipping fee because electricity costs are too low.

Currently, tail pipe emissions have been normal – even when burning railroad ties (which were removed from the definition of solid waste). Once the rule is final, TSP can start operating again. The rule proposes to let TSP have a choice to meeting existing time and temperature requirements or can choose to be regulated under Subpart E for incinerators that burn more than 250 tons/day.

Cement Plants

Initially, cement plants were not considered solid waste incinerators, but plants in King County are burning wastes (oils and tires) as supplemental fuels and these are considered solid wastes. Cement plants are not really designed as solid waste incinerators. Their design and air quality tailpipe emission standards are different for sulfur dioxide and temperature of air as flows into bag house.

Cement plants want complete exemption and would like to burn auto fluff (plastics). This might be a real air quality problem.

Tom presented three options for consideration into the rule:

1. Totally exempt cement plants from 173-434
2. Return cement plants to prior status
 - which can have economic and environmental implications
 - Cement plants could submit applicability determination request and/or file rule Petition
3. Exempt all currently permitted burning and subject them to 173-434 for future applications

- may not be able to expand list of solid waste fuels.

Timeline: Tom Fitzsimmons had a meeting on September 29th with cement kiln industry folks. Air Quality Program hopes to have the rule revised soon after Tom's Fitzsimmons meeting. The deadline for the rule is December 2003.

Mercury in Landfills Study - Kyle Dorsey/Cullen Stephenson

Cullen is looking at the report trying not to compromise the confidentiality of the landfills. The numbers are not scary; they are well within the lower ranges. But the bottom line is we still should not be putting mercury in landfills. The report will be out soon.

Septage Management Update – Marv Vialle

A strategic plan for septage management was developed by a broad based committee and finalized earlier this year. The plan was put before stakeholder groups (EHDs, Coalition for Clean Water, land appliers, SWAC). The biggest area of concern was the funding vehicle. After following up with selected environmental health directors and others, the following conclusions came up:

- A desire to permit all land application
- A need for funding—but not a crisis
- No consensus on a funding approach

The funding approaches that were looked at were:

1. A surcharge to septic tank owners;
2. A surcharge to all recipients of septage (i.e., POTWs, land appliers, pumpers who land apply, etc.); and
3. A surcharge to land appliers.

The most common theme of the environmental health directors was the surcharge to land appliers. This was based on:

- POTWs already charge for septage
- Funding would be for land application management

This may not be a viable alternative because:

- It would modify the current market place balance by adding an extra cost to land appliers, but not to other recipients of septage
- Funding would be used for more than just land application management, and would include enforcement, training, and statewide public education.
- It may be viewed as an anti-private enterprise action

Surcharge to septic tank owners is a viable option, but it would be more costly to implement (compared to the other option). Such as:

- Pumpers would receive portion for handling money (requiring higher surcharge)
- More tracking and a higher number of transactions would be required.

Recommendation: A surcharge of approximately 0.5 cents per gallon (actual numbers to be determined) be collected from each recipient (land applier, POTW, etc.) of septage for the statewide management of septage issues. The distribution of these funds between state and local health jurisdictions should be determined through a collaborative process to ensure that it addresses both the issues of land application, as well as broader issues related to septage.

SWAC comment on Septage Management:

There could be a border county issue. How would we deal with materials that could go out of state rather than to entity that pays the fee?

There wouldn't be a huge cost impact per truck (around \$15)

The administrative cost to do this may be higher than the \$600,000 we are collecting.

Sewer tax has been fairly popular to pay for more sewer lines.

Marv Vialle's comments back to SWAC:

Initially, septage pumpers did favor charging the homeowner, but now they like the recipient pay option.

To turn this into reality, we need to:

- Look at whether legislation is needed
- Amend 308 rule to require all sites to be permitted
- Ensure that stakeholders agree

Currently, around 8 counties are delegated to do the permitting themselves.

SWAC comments:

There is concern that the \$300,000 will only be going to the 8 counties that decided to do permitting and not to the other counties who need to find out what's going on.

We need to talk more about counties that need funding for inspections.

Ultimately, who should the \$300,000 go to?

How can \$600,000 be enough for all counties, plus Ecology? If Ecology gets all the funding, there won't be any for local enforcement.

Round Table

SWANA meeting in Everett – April 8 & 9, 2004. There will be MOLO training prior to SWANA meeting.

The Association of General Contractors and Representative Buck are working on graving dock issue (building pontoons for new bridges). The soil being dug up is contaminated. The project has been halted because archeological artifacts have been found. We will look for short and long term solutions to assure proper soils management.

King County expects to issue a business plan with a lot of internal customer changes which will take effect in 2004.

A summit on CPG grant applications/performance measures is scheduled for June 2004.

Arizona is taking used tires and making rubberized asphalt. There's a 30% cost savings, plus the life cycle of the roads is extended by 50%.

Mary Ann Newell (Mercury free dentistry) encouraged us to become aware of mercury in fillings and thermometers. She was interested in the Mercury in Landfills Study. There's also a concern about Mercury (from fillings) in septage. If you're interested in learning more about mercury in fillings:

www.toxicteeth.net, www.altcorp.com, www.amalgam.org, www.mercola.com, and www.dentistry-toothtruth.com